

- 1. **Organized Name:** Gateway EduCare Infant Center, Preschool and After School Care
- 2. **Contact person:** Stephanie Dunn
- 3. **Contact Email:** sdunn@gatewaymerced.org
- 4. **Contact Phone:** (209) 617-4362
- 5. **Do you have a 501c Tax Designation:** Yes. Tax Exemption Number 77-0449355
- 6. **Submission Date:** March 4, 2022
- 7. **Request for Community Funding Summary:** To better serve the needs of children in our childcare, preschool and grade school programs, and expand to include the needs of more children in our general community, EduCare is seeking funding to build an outdoor splash pad area in our existing lawn space with a park like feel that includes a handicap accessible exercise path for walking, wheelchairs, skating, biking and strollers. *
- 8. **Community Foundation Grant Request Amount:** 92,900.00
- 9. **Total Project Budget:** 92,900.00



#1 – EXERCISE PATH FOR CHILDREN AROUND GRASS YARD

- 590 foot long path, 5 feet wide @\$10/sq. ft. (plus tax).....\$26,521
- 138 foot path to connect to Family Restroom(s).....\$ 7,470
- Miscellaneous edging materials, etc.....\$ 1,409
- TOTAL Request for Project #1..... \$35,400**

#2 – SHADE & PLAY EQUIPMENT AREAS/TABLES

- Three (3) gazebo-type shades @ about \$1700 (plus tax).....\$ 5,518
- Cement pads & short walk-ways (handicap accessible) to shades.....\$ 2,435
- Miscellaneous hardware, etc.\$ 47
- TOTAL Request for Project #2 \$ 8,000**

#3 – SPLASH PAD

- Splash pad equipment to be installed (estimate).....\$19,000
- Installation of splash-pad equipment (estimate).....\$22,000
- Running electricity to pad (estimate).....\$ 4,000
- Running water to pad (estimate).....\$ 4,500

TOTAL Request for Project #3\$49,500

10. What Category does your Grant fit?: Education and Community Development

11. What would these funds be used for specifically?: Expand the current cement path around the existing grass yard, shade and play equipment area (tables, gazebos), and a splash pad. A notable amount of sweat equity has already been invested to jump start this project, and so much more to come. An estimated \$40,414.00 has been invested so far and has included clearing of old grass/weed materials and a few fruit trees, leveling, grading, and reseeding grass, purchasing and distributing small rocks around the perimeter along with fencing.

12. How will this Grant improve the quality of life in Merced County? Children of our community (and their families) have been in great need of better outdoor exercise options for much better quality of life during the pandemic and to meet on-going ways to help fight against such conditions as obesity, lethargy, and lack of good energy. During the height of the pandemic, Gateway EduCare was one of the unique providers that not only kept its doors open to the public, but expanded its offerings to invite the children of essential workers to an all-day program. Many of the essential working families had both parents fall into that category and therefore no one to stay at home to care for their children. Gateway EduCare served 60 children and their families during this time. More than 80% of those families had no prior affiliation to Gateway EduCare. We truly care for the needs of the greater community. This program resulted in a net loss of \$6k for Gateway EduCare during the pandemic.

Additionally, the walkway will provide a uniquely special space for children with handicaps to use their wheelchairs or walkers to participate in the same walkway as other children. Gateway EduCare originally planned for this walkway to be made of crushed granite, a much less expensive material than concrete, but felt strongly in providing access to handicapped children.

Finally, during excessively hot days in Merced, there could be the possibility of opening the outdoor area to the community as a cooling off space. The outdoor area will have shade and fun water for kids to play in rather than being cooped up indoors all day.

13. Roughly how many people will be impacted by this Grant?: Gateway EduCare alone serves 80 families daily, year round. Our program operates Monday - Friday, 7:00 am-6:00 pm. Seventy percent of these families are not affiliated with Gateway in addition Gateway EduCare is currently serving 38 families that receive assistance through Access. Summer Camp program operates during summer hours and currently has a capacity of 45 but could increase to 175. The summer program is only \$100 per week and runs for 9 weeks for 10 hours a day—again, an offering to the entire community at a price that doesn't fully cover costs. Local schools would also have the opportunity to take

walking field trips to the splash pad, as could families (including those with children with mobility issues and other disabilities) in the surrounding neighborhood. Thousands of kids could have access to this great new outdoor play space.

14. How will you measure this?: Gateway EduCare has been operating successfully since 2005. EduCare has had a consistent long waitlist for infant/ toddler care and our Preschool program. The amount of children currently enrolled in our program alone would benefit from this outdoor area. Being able to expand capacity to allow for hundreds of kids to utilize it is even more exciting. Having days where this can be open to children in the community as well as the local schools or home schooled children is important to consider as well. Not limited to children with mobility issues or disabilities. It will not be difficult to measure the number of children and families who are able to enjoy the space.

15. Is there anything else you would like to share with us?:

We are currently trying to raise money to increase the capacity of our buildings for children. We are not asking money for that but this will help contribute to the vision and allow more space for outdoor activities, children within our programs, the surrounding neighborhood, and community

2020 – Re-landscaping EduCare back area – ~\$14,000

2021 - Cleared large lawn's landscaping, regraded, repaired sprinklers, new grass seeded, brought in small rocks/ground cover, purchased used 40'x40' tent, purchased 12 10'x10' shades, poured concrete pad for seating/stage area, purchased and located 2 storage units - approximately \$48,975 and considerable "sweat equity" by staff & volunteers.

- Total invested so far in the past two years: about \$62,975 & "sweat equity"

INDIVIDUAL STAFF EXPERIENCE a) Provide a listing of each key staff who will be assigned to the project and background information demonstrating their capabilities and qualifications to perform the assigned tasks. b) For each staff member: current professional credentials/education, related experience, and years of experience with the organization.

1. Stephanie Dunn – (7 years with us) EduCare Director
2. Mark Humphreys – Executive Pastor (7+ years), management & administrative experience
3. Shawn Henry – (15 years with us) retired fire chief, maintenance & management skills, facilities oversight
4. Bob Alkema – (24 years with us) retired boat builder, manufacturing & construction, property ownership/management
5. Greg Ramirez – (5+ years with us) construction (concrete specialty)

Please see correspondence below from past and current families:

To Whom it may concern,

I am writing to you today, hoping that you consider Gateway EduCare Center for grant funding to get a splash pad for the children. The splash pad will allow them to spend more time outside during the hot summer months and for me personally, it will give my son another opportunity for sensory play as well as help him learn to play with others children his age. These skills will help him transition into preschool next year. My son, Mateo, is currently receiving behavioral services as well as services through the CVRC, all of which Stephanie has accommodated at Gateway EduCare Center so that i can continue to work and provide for my family as a single parent.

Since COVID-19 everyone has been stuck staying home and are spending more time inside vs outside, which also means children are also spending more time on electronic devices instead of learning to play outside. Having a splash pad at Gateway EduCare Center will encourage more outdoor play and will give the children that attend the center an opportunity to experience water play that they may not get in their home environments.

Thank you for your consideration,
Andrea Alcon, EduCare Parent

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing in support of the collaboration between the City of Merced and Gateway EduCare to provide a community access water play structure in the Peterson neighborhood.

As a neighbor of both Gateway EduCare and Peterson School, I think the gracious offer to provide space for this park is just what our neighborhood kids need. As you know, the Peterson school playground is behind a locked gate and there are no other safe neighborhood parks for our children to play. There are two playgrounds in the Rascal Creek walking path, however those playgrounds are hidden which makes for a perfect place for individuals to partake in their risky behaviors that we don't want our children observing. In December of 2021, there was a 65 year-old man who was accused of abducting an 8-year-old child near Rahilly Park (which is the Park the Rascal Creek path leads to off of Parsons). I believe a water play structure located on Gateway property, adjacent to Donna Drive where there is an open and visible space allows for our children to play in a safe community driven environment.

I am sure I don't need to share with you how the pandemic has impacted our children and the sense of community in our town. I believe a common gathering place will bring not only children, but families together to help rebuild our neighborhood connections.

Gateway EduCare has always been welcoming to all in our community. Many of our neighborhood children who are not members of the church attend their After School Program, are enrolled in their EduCare daycare program, and/or attend their Summer Camp. Gateway EduCare offers numerous children's programs that are open to all and include our neighborhood such as the Movie in the Park and Fall Fest carnival for Halloween.

I recognize this partnership benefits Gateway EduCare, but I do believe the partnership is a win-win for both the church and the neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Vanessa C. E. Hauser vcehauser@gmail.com Parent and Neighbor

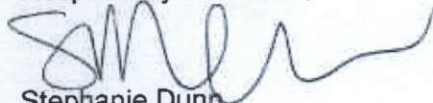
Hi there!

I am a marriage and family therapist and my husband works for State parole. During the pandemic we were both required to leave our homes for work. My job was located at a school campus seeing students in crisis and the office for telehealth services to keep confidentiality of my clients. Our jobs did not stop during the state's mandated closures, so it was really helpful to have a day care service that was open during this time. Gateway made it accessible and safe. They kept communication lines open should there be any exposures or concerns. I knew my kids were well taken care of and received much needed socialization.

Kristal Struble

Thank you for your time and consideration for this proposal.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephanie Dunn', written over the printed name.

Stephanie Dunn

Mar 4, 2022